

## IMPERFECTIONS OF SENSATIONS

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other point of view it appears to be more or less oval. We judge it to be circular, not from its actual appearance but from our memory of previous similar impressions of it, coupled with experiences of touch : we *infer* that it is circular, although to our sensation it may appear oval. So also with colours, the actual appearance of which varies very greatly according to the amount of light that falls upon them and the direction from which it falls. Our real guide is not sensation, but perception, which is sensation adjusted in the light of previous experiences. Not only then, is the brain, as we have seen, the origin of sensation, but it needs processes of the brain to render sensory impressions useful to us. Practice enables us to adjust with instantaneous rapidity. But babies that reach for a bright object, regardless of its distance, prove that the faculty of adjustment rests upon experience. Having made these adjustments habitually, we can hardly disembarass ourselves of their guidance. It is quite difficult to draw things, not as we infer them to be, but as they actually appear: children's pictures, primitive art and oriental art all aim at truth by representing not the seen but the inferred. It requires, indeed, an artist to set down the simple impressions of the eyes. These are in perspective, and those who look at the pictures are convinced of solidity by their own powers of

inference.

Our sensory impressions need  
then <sup>to</sup> be  
adjusted before they will guide us  
trustworthily.  
and we correct each one of them <sup>as it</sup>  
comes. <sup>by</sup>  
investing it with attributes. such as  
roundness <sup>or</sup>  
solidity. which it does not appear to  
possess. <sup>but</sup>  
which we infer from the memory of  
previous  
impressions and tactile experiences  
that <sup>it</sup> does  
possess. In other words. the key to  
our <sup>impressions</sup>  
is a stock of memories and  
ability to infer